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Admiral Turner excellent choice for director of intelligence

Adm. Stansfield Turner is an excellent choice for director of central intelligence. Rhode Islanders had an opportunity to judge him when he was the innovative president of the Naval War College at Newport for two years; and the consensus was that he displayed extraordinary intellectual ability, combined with an openness to new ideas and wide contact with the civilian community.

Those who were familiar with his restructuring of the war college, his tendency to do his own, original thinking and his broad grasp of global problems must conclude that he is the ideal military man for the sensitive intelligence post. Having met with him twice in editorial conferences and on numerous other occasions, the editorial staff of this newspaper has few qualms about his military background.

Admiral Turner has an impressive record of education and service. He distinguished himself intellectually at Amherst College, at the Naval Academy and as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford. In addition to routine tours of duty, he had two tours in defense systems analysis before coming to the war college at Newport. A protege of Adm. Elmo Zumwalt, then chief of naval operations, who was injecting innovations into the Navy in general, Admiral Turner proceeded to revolutionize the curriculum and force officers taking the course to read extensively and grapple with difficult problems of world politics.

President Carter was perhaps a bit fulsome in calling his Annapolis classmate a man "who could be the next George Marshall." Some who have known him feel he will make a better CIA chief than a chief of naval operations, because of the scholarly cast of his thought. Others, including those who supported Theodore Sorenson, Mr.

Carter's first choice, would have preferred a civilian in the CIA position. Yet Admiral Turner has more apparent qualifications as an administrator, and he may have a better grasp of intelligence matters.

At this point in its history, the agency needs a man who will prevent a repetition of past abuses and illegal activities and also keep a tight rein on covert operations. The President has indicated that was the type of director he wanted, and it is not illogical to expect Admiral Turner to be in sympathy with his objective.

An article he wrote for the current issue of *Foreign Affairs* magazine displays the kind of broad-gauge thinking that Admiral Turner showed at the war college and in talks to Rhode Island and New England groups. Entitled "The Naval Balance: Not Just a Numbers Game," the article stresses that there are varying acceptable degrees of naval balance and that they may well depend on "judgments which transcend the power of military men." It also displays a lucid, incisive style, which should make his reports more understandable to president and laymen alike.

John Chafee, Rhode Island's new senator, with whom Admiral Turner served as an executive aide while he was secretary of the navy, has praised the man's independence and initiative. The admiral, for his part, revealed in a taped interview with the *Rhode Islander* magazine in 1973, that he keeps a civilian consultant or two in his employ, so that he can "call upon them for a totally frank and a rather different look at things."

We would expect that any misgivings that other senators may have about him will be dissipated in the hearings on his nomination.